

# The Case of Edmond Prideaux Esq;

**T**HAT the Borough of *Taunton* is an Antient Borough by Prescription, and time out of mind hath sent two Burgeses to Sit in Parliament, which have been chosen by the House-keepers thereof not receiving Relief.

That in pursuance of a Writ under the Great Seal of *England*, a Precept Issued from the Sheriff of the County of *Somerset*, directed to the Mayor of the said Borough for the Election of two Burgeses to Serve for the said Borough in this present Parliament.

That after the date of the said Writ, and before the time of Election, several Briberies, Threats and Promises, and other Illegal Practices were used to procure Votes for Sir *John Cutler*, and to deter others from Voting for *Edmond Prideaux* Esq; and *John Trenchard* Esq; particularly several Notorious Riots being committed in the said Borough, those that promised to Vote for Sir *John Cutler* were discharged without any punishment; and some that would have Voted for the said Mr. *Prideaux* and Mr. *Trenchard* were committed to Goal without Bail or Mainprize, upon a pretended Burglary: whereas it appeared plainly on their Tryal, that no Burglary was committed, but only to keep them from Voting for the said Mr. *Prideaux* and Mr. *Trenchard*; and they were offered a Discharge if they would give their Votes for Sir *John Cutler*.

That *William Turner*, then Mayor of the said Borough, did declare before the said Election, That he was resolved to Return Sir *John Cutler*, although he had not the Majority of Voices of the Electors.

That the said Mayor combining with the Friends and Agents of Sir *John Cutler*, did Erect a Booth in an unusual part of the said Borough, where they endeavoured to shut out such of the Inhabitants as came to Vote for the said Mr. *Prideaux* and Mr. *Trenchard*, and admitted many of the Voters for Sir *John Cutler*, who behaved themselves very rudely and insolently at the time of Election.

That the Mayor admitted no Clerk to take the Poll on the behalf of the said Mr. *Prideaux* and Mr. *Trenchard*, and hath ever since denied them a Copy thereof.

That the better to colour their intended design, several Strangers were brought in by the Friends and Agents of the said Sir *John Cutler* in a tumultuous manner; whereupon the said Mayor did shut up the Poll, and refused to take the Names of such as were ready to Vote for the said Mr. *Prideaux* and Mr. *Trenchard*; 231 of which were afterwards Polled for the said Mr. *Prideaux* and Mr. *Trenchard* in the presence of Five Members of this Honourable House.

That notwithstanding all the said Practices, the said Mr. *Prideaux* and Mr. *Trenchard* had about Fifty more Voices on the Poll than the said Sir *John Cutler*; but the said Mayor nevertheless did unjustly Return Sir *John Cutler*, together with the said Mr. *Trenchard*, although the said Mr. *Prideaux* and Mr. *Trenchard* were duly Elected Burgeses of the said Borough.